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BANGALORE, THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 1908.


## PART III.

### Legislative Measures and Rules thereunder.

The following bill is published for general information, together with a statement of objects and reasons therefor :—

### THE MYSORE NEWSPAPERS BILL.

REGULATION No. OF 1908.

WHEREAS it is expedient to provide for the efficient control of the publication of newspapers and other printed works containing public news,

HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA is pleased to enact as follows :—

(1) This Regulation may be called "The Mysore Newspapers Regulation, 1908.",

(2) It extends to the whole of Mysore ; and

(3) It shall come into force thirty days after its first publication in the official Gazette.

2. No newspaper or other printed work, whether periodical or other, containing public news or comments upon public news, shall, without the written permission of the Government of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore, be edited, printed or published within the territories of Mysore.

3. Any written permission granted by the Government of His Highness the Maharaja for the editing, printing, or publishing of any such newspaper or other work as aforesaid may at any time be withdrawn by the Government.

4. If any person shall, without such permission as aforesaid, or after such permission has been withdrawn by the Government, edit, print or publish any such newspaper or other work as aforesaid in the said territories of Mysore, the Government may, by an order in writing, signed by the Secretary to the Government in the General and Revenue Departments,

(*a*) require such person to leave the territories of Mysore within seven days from the date of such order, and

(*b*) prohibit him from re-entering the said territories without the written permission of the Government, and

(*c*) declare all printing presses, engines, machinery, types, lithographic stones, paper, and other implements, utensils, plant and materials used or employed, or intended to be used or employed, in or for the purpose of printing or publishing such newspaper or other work as aforesaid, or found in or about any premises where such newspaper or other work as aforesaid is printed or published, and all copies of such newspaper or other work as aforesaid wherever found, to be forfeited to the Government, and dispose of the same in such manner as it shall deem fit.

5. If any such order as is mentioned in clauses (*a*) and (*b*) of the last preceding section be disobeyed, the offender shall be liable to forcible expulsion from the territories of Mysore.

6. (1) No newspaper or other printed work, edited, printed or published beyond the limits of the territories of Mysore after being the subject of an order under section 4, and

(2) no newspaper in regard to which any such prohibition as is referred to in section 7 of the Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) Act, 1908, has been notified and continues in force, in British India,

shall be circulated within the territories of Mysore.

7. If any such newspaper or other printed work as is specified in section 6 shall be circulated within the territories of Mysore,

(i) the District Magistrate may declare all copies of such newspaper or other printed work wherever found to be forfeited to Government and may by warrant empower any Police Officer not below the rank of Sub-Inspector to seize and carry away any copies of such newspaper or other printed work wherever found, and to enter upon and search for such copies in any premises where they may be kept for sale, distribution, publication or public exhibition, or reasonably suspected to be so kept; and

(ii) any person who circulates, or attempts to circulate, or abets the circulation of, any such newspaper or other printed work in the territories of Mysore, may be dealt with by the Government under clauses (*a*) and (*b*) of section 4 and section 5, as if such person had edited, printed or published any newspaper within the territories of Mysore without the written permission of the Government.

8. In this Regulation the expressions "print," "printed," and "printing" shall apply not only to printing but also to lithography, engraving, and photography.

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## STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS.

THE GOVERNMENT OF HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA have had under consideration the question of placing the publication of newspapers in Mysore under better control, and of providing more effective means than are available under the existing law for dealing with that section of the public press in Mysore which has for some time past been creating considerable mischief by misrepresenting the actions of the Government and attributing unworthy motives to it, and by indulging in remarks calculated to promote racial hatred, and in objectionable criticisms of the British Government in its relations with its own subjects as well as with the Native States. His Highness' Government view with extreme disapproval the attempts made by organs published in the State to mislead and prejudice the people of Mysore against the Paramount Power.

Action of the kind contemplated is all the more necessary in view of the pernicious effects this class of writing is calculated to have on the minds of ignorant and uninformed persons generally and of students and young people in particular, by undermining the feelings of reverence associated with His Highness personally and by destroying all respect for authority. It would be a grave error to underestimate the degree and the extent of these evil effects, since newspapers are in these days no longer limited in their circulation to the better educated classes who are in a position to discount misstatements. On the contrary, owing to the policy of Government in

promoting elementary education among all classes, every section of the community, rural as well as urban, is now exposed to the influence of the press, whether for good or for evil; and, consequently, a new responsibility is imposed upon the Government to protect the ignorantly credulous from evil influences which it is within their power to control.

The language adopted by some of the newspapers in question would imply that His Highness is not responsible for the actions of his Government, that he is dissociated from his Government and that he does not concern himself personally with the administration of the State. It is necessary once again to affirm in the clearest manner that His Highness is personally and solely responsible for the good Government of the country and that while all fair, honest and *bona fide* criticism of his administration is welcomed, comments cannot be permitted in the public press which pass the bounds of such criticism, or tend to bring his administration into contempt, or misrepresent the motives and actions of his advisers and officers.

So far back as the year 1894, the Government had to suspend the publication of a vernacular newspaper which indulged in remarks derogatory of the Ruler of the State. In April 1907, a warning was given by the Government to the *Suryodaya* newspaper and to the press generally, but it has apparently had no effect. On more than one occasion when authoritative contradictions of misstatements appearing in certain newspapers were sent to them, these have either been not published at all or published in a mutilated form or made the occasion for further perversion of facts and vilification of the Government. Moreover the refusal of at least one of the editors concerned to take advantage of the opportunity offered to him of obtaining correct information on certain matters which had formed the subject of comment in his newspaper argues a disinclination either to learn the truth on public matters or to communicate the same to the public.

The Government of His Highness are aware that the manner in which these newspapers have been persistently misrepresenting and vilifying the Government is strongly resented by the people generally, but they have hitherto abstained from taking any decisive action in the matter in the hope that the press would in course of time gain in moderation and a sense of responsibility. It is evident, however, that the meaning of this forbearance has been mistaken and that there are clear indications that the directors of certain newspapers, emboldened by long immunity from punishment, believe that they are accountable to no one for their actions and are at liberty to continue their reckless and irresponsible course unchecked. The Government of His Highness consider that the evil has assumed serious proportions which can no longer be disregarded, and that in the interests of His Highness' subjects, no less than in those of good Government generally, a restrictive measure which will enable the Government to deal promptly and adequately with the mischief-mongers of the Newspaper Press is imperatively required.

The present Regulation for the control of the publication of newspapers in Mysore is largely based on the provisions of Order No. 2651—I, dated 25th June 1891, issued by H. E. the Governor-General in Council, and in force in the Civil and Military Station of Bangalore.

By order,

C. S. BALASUNDARAM IYER,

*Secretary, Mysore Legislative Council.*